



Boulder County

**Boulder County
Land Use Department
Publications**

**Preble's
Meadow
Jumping
Mouse**

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Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse

Do You Live Near Streams or Ditches in the Foothills or Plains of Boulder County?

So does a kind of mouse that has been listed for special protection by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Before you make any substantial changes to your property in places where the mouse might live, you should either check with Boulder County or the Fish and Wildlife Service to find out what these legal protections mean.

The **Preble's meadow jumping mouse** is typically found in thick vegetation within stream corridors, adjacent uplands, and along ditches in the Front Range of Colorado and the southern portion of Wyoming. Steady encroachment into its habitat over the years has reduced the mouse's numbers to the extent that federal biologists believe Preble's faces extinction unless actions are taken now for its protection. To begin that process, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed the Preble's mouse as a "threatened" species under the federal Endangered Species Act on May 13, 1998.

As a result of this listing, **no federal agencies** may take any action that might result in further jeopardizing the continued existence of Preble's. Actions requiring federal support or approval, such as a right-of-way across federal land or a Section 404 permit for dredging or filling in streams or wetlands, must be formally scrutinized to ensure protection for the mouse.

Activities occurring on **either public or private lands** in which Preble's mice may live are prohibited from harming, harassing, or killing a mouse or damaging its habitat. Generally, if the activity involves new construction, significant changes of surface landscaping, or increased usage by humans or domestic animals it could be in violation of the Endangered Species Act.

The **intention of these provisions** is to protect remaining mice while actions are taken to bring about the species' recovery.

What Does This Mean To You?

Probably little or nothing if you plan to keep using your land in the same manner as you have in the past. But if you are planning to change the use of your land or the level of activity on it and your property has been identified as being in a mapped floodplain or a Preble's meadow jumping mouse conservation area per.

1. Provide the Land Use Department with a site plan and photos showing the proposed development area (structure location, driveway/access, other areas to be disturbed) in context to the existing habitat conditions.
2. The Land Use Department will then send this information to the USFWS to see if there are any mouse or habitat issues associated with the proposal on your property.
 - ✓ If USFWS does not have issues, you may proceed with submitting the application for your proposal and your land use review will begin.
 - ✓ If USFWS requests further field study and/or trapping, this will be considered a prerequisite to you starting the land use review process. Your application will not be considered complete until the possible. Preble's issues have been resolved with USFWS. Most recent direction about receiving proposals is listed on reverse.

The State of Colorado has organized a collaborative process under which interested parties are working to develop habitat conservation plans so that activities along the Front Range can occur in a manner that is compatible with protection of the Preble's mouse. Once these plans are in place, you will be able to work with a county-level review process to ensure that your activity is ok. Until then it is necessary to get clearance from the USFWS. To find out more about the habitat conservation planning process in Boulder County, call Peter Fogg or Kim Sanchez at 303-441-3930 or Ron West at County Open Space and Parks Dept. at 303-678-6269.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Determinations as of September 9th, 2003.

The Following Constitutes Projects that will not Require Additional Review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

1. Projects that will be attached to an existing structure or within 25 feet of an existing structure (i.e., decks, home additions, garages, sunrooms, sheds).
2. Projects with a total new footprint of 400 square feet or less that occur outside of, but within 300 feet of, the 100-year floodplain.
3. Projects occurring within established maintained, landscaped yards.
4. Projects occurring within areas with established privacy fences.

5. Construction of all non-privacy fences such as, but not limited to, wire or split rail fences within Preble's habitat, provided that fencing will not be used in conjunction with new livestock or cattle grazing practices.
6. Projects that occur outside of, but within 300 feet of, the 100-year floodplain but are separated from Preble's habitat by a paved road more than 25 feet wide.

The Following Constitutes Projects that will Require Additional Review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

1. Any disturbance of soil or vegetation within the 100-year floodplain.
2. Construction of new privacy fences within 300 feet of the 100-year floodplain.
3. Any permanent structure or temporary disturbance with a new footprint greater than 400 square feet within 300 feet of the 100-year floodplain, except as described above.
4. Leach fields or septic systems that occur within 300 feet of the 100-year floodplain.
5. Construction of fencing to create new grazing areas for livestock or cattle within Preble's habitat.



Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse - Photo Courtesy: Rob Schorr of the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP).